

THIRD REPORT

OF THE

COMMISSIONERS

OF

NATIONAL EDUCATION

IN IRELAND,

FOR THE YEAR ENDING MARCH

1836.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty.

LONDON:

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1836.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY

HENRY CONSTANTINE EARL OF MULGRAVE,

Lord Lieutenant-General and General-Governor of Ireland.

May it please your Excellency,

WE, the undersigned Commissioners, appointed to administer the Funds granted by Parliament for the Education of the Poor of Ireland, beg leave to lay before your Excellency this our Third Report.

I. We established during the last year 150 schools, and agreed to grant aid towards the building of 78 others.

We struck off 35 schools which were in operation at the time of our last Report, and we cancelled 33 grants which we had then agreed to make.

We give a list of the schools which have been struck off, and of the grants which have been cancelled, in the Appendix, and we have specified the reasons opposite to each.

We have also incorporated 40 schools with others.

We have in operation at present 1,181 schools; we give a list of them in the Appendix, and we specify opposite to each the number of children in attendance upon it, according to the rolls of the last year.*

The new schools are distinguished by an asterisk, and we give opposite to each the amount of aid which it has received.

We also give, in the Appendix, a list of the schools towards which we have agreed to grant aid, but which have not been as yet completed; some of these were given in the Appendix to our last Report. The new ones here, too, are distinguished by an asterisk. We state opposite to each the number of children which it is expected will attend it.

There are now before us upwards of 400 applications for aid towards new schools: it must depend upon the amount of the grant which may be made for the present year whether we shall be enabled to accede to any of them, and to what extent we shall have it in our power to do so.

Considerable progress has been made in the buildings which we are having erected for model and training establishments. We hope they will be completed within a few months, and that we shall then be enabled to proceed extensively, and with effect, to the perfecting of teachers for our several schools. This is a work which we deem of vital importance to the whole system of National Education.

We have not hitherto had it in our power to bring forward the class of teachers which we desire to raise up, but our training establishment will, we hope, enable us to do so, provided we can secure the services of competent persons by adequate salaries.

At present, the salaries which the funds placed at our disposal afford are by no means sufficient to induce persons possessing the requisite qualifications for teachers to devote themselves to our schools.

We are, therefore, most anxious that further provision should be made for the purpose, and we earnestly recommend the subject to your Excellency's consideration.

II. Having thus stated our progress during the last year, we proceed, according to your Excellency's desire, to notice a late pamphlet, entitled "A speech delivered in the House of Lords, 15th March 1838, in moving for a Select Committee to inquire into the Operation of the Commission for National Education in Ireland, by Henry Lord Bishop of Exeter."

* These rolls are made up and returned to us half-yearly, and no children are included in them who have not been in actual attendance within the preceding six months.

1. The author, professing to comment on our Second Report, imputes to us, in the first place, gross neglect of duty as to religious instruction, and utter indifference as to the morals of our teachers. His words are :—

“ Let the House recollect that the establishment of a system of education, resting on religious instruction, is that for which the Board was appointed; that religious instruction was declared to be the very foundation and basis of the whole plan; and, therefore, if it has failed in that, it has failed at the very root. I entreat your Lordships then to observe how the Commissioners have provided for religious instruction in these schools to be established throughout Ireland. There are to be, as I have said, 5,000 teachers, and these teachers are to receive a very advanced species of education. I will beg leave to read to your Lordships in what manner, and on what subjects, these schoolmasters are to be instructed.

“ In order to secure teachers of skill and intelligence, we propose establishing five professorships in our training institutions. 1st, Of the art of teaching and conducting schools. 2d, Of composition, English literature, history, geography, and political economy. 3d, Of natural history, in all its branches. 4th, of mathematics and mathematical sciences. 5th, Of mental philosophy, including the elements of logic and rhetoric.”

“ My Lords, these are most important subjects, certainly, and cannot be too much encouraged in their proper order. I quarrel not now with the attempt to give this wide circle of knowledge to the schoolmasters of Ireland; I only contend that the main object is not provided for, and that the plan of the Commissioners is not likely to attain that object. For it must be observed, that in the Report of the Commissioners, when speaking of the qualification of schoolmasters, there is a total absence of anything like a reference to religion: that for anything that appears to the contrary they may be Atheists! No mode is pointed out by which the slightest particle of religious knowledge can be obtained by them. It may, perhaps, be said that they will partake of the general means of religious instruction given by the Board in all the schools under their control; but if this be said, I must take leave to deny the correctness of the statement. The only principle on which the Board rests its expectation of adequate religious instruction being given in its schools is the duty of the several pastors of congregations in the different parishes to attend to the teaching of their respective flocks. But how can such pastors contrive to instruct those who were formerly under their charge, when they are removed to the Normal School of Dublin, or of some other great city or country town in Ireland? My Lords, it is impossible. These 5,000 schoolmasters will be left to pick up their religion as they can; and I must say, that this is the first time that the people of this country were ever asked to believe that children can be taught the only truths which it is essential for them to know—true morality and true religion—by those who are not deeply imbued with the principles of religion themselves.

“ But these teachers are not merely to benefit the people of Ireland through the schools committed to their charge. Identified in interest with the State, and therefore anxious to promote a spirit of obedience to lawful authority, we are confident (says the Report) that they would prove a body of the utmost value and importance in promoting civilization and peace.”

“ My Lords, a higher authority than these Commissioners has commanded a different course to be pursued in training men to loyalty: ‘Fear God and honour the King’ says a book, which, whatever the Commissioners may think of it, your Lordships are not yet so liberal as to discard. My Lords, the fear of God must go first, for no man will honour the King, no man will be loyal or faithful to his earthly governor, who does not fear God, who does not honour the King, because he fears God; and yet there is not the slightest care taken, I repeat it, to teach these teachers their only true lesson of wisdom; nay, there is not the slightest security taken against the appointment of the most godless youths in Ireland to be teachers in these schools.

“ It is singular enough, but it does so happen, that about the time when the Report of the Commissioners was presented to the House, the Minister of Public Instruction in France directed a circular letter to be addressed to the rectors of the academies in that country; and it is not a little mortifying to observe how much more importance the French Minister attached to religion, as an essential part of education, than has been ascribed to it by the Commissioners. Yet this was not wont to be the case. This country was not wont to be inferior to France in reverence for religion, or zeal for the promotion of its sacred cause. My Lords, M. Guizot says, ‘It has been sometimes thought that to succeed in securing to families of different creeds the reality and the freedom of religious instruction, it was sufficient to substitute for the special lessons and practices of the several religious denominations some lessons and practices susceptible in appearance of being applied to all religions; such measures would not answer the real wish either of families or of the law; they would tend to banish all positive and effective religious instruction from the schools, in order to substitute one that is merely vague and abstract.’

“ Such are the observations of M. Guizot on the subject of generalized religious instruction in schools; but then follows a passage of greater importance, tending to show the feeling with which the French Minister entertains as to the absolute necessity of giving a sound religious education to those whose duty it will be to instruct others—a point upon which the Commissioners, I grieve to say, are altogether silent. The passage runs thus :—

“ If the reality and the freedom of the religious instruction of the children ought to be thus secured in all schools, and for all creeds, with still stronger reason ought the same care to be taken for the religious instruction of the teachers themselves who are to be placed at the head of these schools.”

“ My Lords, I should be glad to hear any Noble Lord get up and say he has found a

passage like this in any part of the Report of these Commissioners. Alas! there is not a single syllable in it of the kind; I am sure, therefore, that your Lordships will feel that the recommendation of the Commissioners, as far as concerns one great and essential particular—the religious instruction of the teachers—is not only defective (that would be to say little), but positively vicious: without religion all other knowledge can only lead, as it always has led, the corrupt nature of man to a more frightful excess of wickedness. In short, my Lords, by omitting to provide for the effective religious instruction of the teachers, the Commissioners have neglected their first and most obvious duty."

We now request your Excellency to turn from the pamphlet to the Report, and to observe how we express ourselves in it on the subject of religious instruction. Speaking of our schools in general,—of those schools in which our teachers are to receive their first training,—we distinctly say, 'In them the importance of religion is constantly impressed on the minds of the children through works calculated to promote good principles, and fill the heart with a love for religion, but which are so compiled as not to clash with the doctrines of any particular class of Christians. The children are thus prepared for those more strict religious exercises which it is the peculiar province of the minister of religion to superintend or direct, and for which stated times are set apart in each school, so that each class of Christians may thus receive, separately, such religious instruction, and from such persons, as their parents or pastors may approve or appoint.'

The author of the pamphlet has suppressed the whole of this.

Whatever he may think of it, we trust it will satisfy all who seek truth in the spirit of truth, that we are not less alive to the importance of religion, as an essential part of education, than the Minister of Public Instruction in France, whose words upon the subject are carefully given in the pamphlet, while ours are as carefully suppressed.

Then—as to our teachers in particular—we say in the Report, 'If we are furnished with adequate means by the State, not only for the training schoolmasters, but for inducing competent persons to become candidates for teacherships through a fair prospect of remuneration and advancement, we have no doubt whatever that a new class of schoolmasters may be trained whose conduct and influence must be highly beneficial in promoting morality, harmony, and good order in the country parts of Ireland.' This, too, the pamphlet has suppressed. We add, 'It is only through such persons we can hope to render the National Schools successful in improving the general condition of the people. It is not, however, merely through the schools committed to their charge that the beneficial influence of their conduct would be felt. Living in friendly habits with the people, not greatly elevated above them, but so provided for as to be able to maintain a respectable station; trained to good habits, identified in interest with the State, and, therefore, anxious to promote a spirit of obedience to lawful authority, we are confident that they would prove a body of the utmost value and importance in promoting civilization and peace.'

This the pamphlet does not utterly omit. It does, however, what is worse; it garbles our words as follows: 'But these teachers are not merely to benefit the people of Ireland "through the schools committed to their charge, identified in interest with the State, and, therefore, anxious to promote a spirit of obedience to lawful authority; we are confident (says the Report) that they would prove a body of the utmost value and importance in promoting civilization and peace."'" The original sentence, it will be observed, contains the words '*trained to good habits*;' whereas, as quoted in the pamphlet, these words are left out, and the reader has the impression conveyed to him that we depend for the conduct of the teachers, not on a virtuous training, but on interest only.

This is not all. The Appendix to the Report contains a copy of our Regulations; and one of them, relating to the choice of teachers, is as follows: 'Local patrons and committees of schools are expected to select suitable teachers and to superintend them; but the Commissioners will require to be satisfied of the fitness of the teachers, both in regard to moral character and to literary qualifications by testimonials, and also, if they see fit, by training in a Model School and examination.' Not a word of this is given in the pamphlet; the author passes it by altogether, and, doing so, ventures to assert that, for anything that appears to the contrary in the Report, our schoolmasters may be "Atheists;" and that "there is not the slightest security taken against the appointment of the most godless youths in Ireland to be teachers in these schools."

But what is our practice in the National Model School of Dublin, in that school in which our teachers are finally perfected? It is this:—the Ten Command-

ments are constantly hung up in it, so is the Christian Lesson, which our rules enjoin. A portion of the word of God is daily read from our Scripture Extracts; and, at stated times, the Protestant and Roman Catholic parochial clergy attend and give religious instruction. This is our practice; it is the very reverse of what might be inferred from the pamphlet. Perhaps the author was unacquainted with it; we hope he was; but then it should be recollected that he who makes statements against his neighbour, without taking the proper means of ascertaining whether they be true or false, sins grievously.

The two great commandments in which our Lord sums up Christian duty are, "To love the Lord our God with all our heart, and to love one's neighbour as one's self;" and it is hardly possible to violate both of them in one act more effectually than by promoting the dishonour of God through the means of a slander of one's neighbour.

2. The pamphlet, in the next place, charges us with positive falsehood. The author says, "They state, in particular, that no fewer than 140 clergymen of the Established Church, 180 of the Presbyterian persuasion, and 1,397 Roman Catholic clergymen, have been among the applicants for their aid in the establishment of the new schools. Now I have taken the trouble to investigate this matter, and I find, by the Returns which have been laid before the House, that, with respect to the 140 persons described as clergymen of the Established Church who have given in their adhesion to the plan of the Commissioners, there are, in fact, only 80." Then, as to the Presbyterian clergymen, he says, "Though the number of applications is 180, the number of applicants is about 90." And he insists that what we have thus stated "is not only not true, but contrary to the truth."

The author here first misrepresents our Report, and then, on his own misrepresentation, grounds a charge of positive falsehood against us.

We neither stated, nor professed to state, in the Report, the number of clergymen who had applied to us for aid. What we did was this: Having given a list of our schools, and having stated, opposite to each, the number of signatures to the application for it, distinguishing the lay from the clerical, and the Protestant from the Roman Catholic, we had the whole added up; and, finding that the Protestant ecclesiastical signatures bore to the Roman Catholic about the same proportion that Protestants bear to Roman Catholics, in the mass of the population, we noticed the fact in the body of the Report thus:—"Of the signatures to the applications made to us for aid, 140 are those of clergymen of the Established Church, 180 of Presbyterian clergymen, 1,397 of Roman Catholic clergymen, 6,915 of Protestant laymen, and 8,630 of Roman Catholic laymen." It may be said that the Protestant clerical signatures are much fewer than the Roman Catholic; but we understand that, according to the late census taken by the Commissioners of Public Instruction, the number of Protestants of the Established Church in Ireland is about 852,000, the number of Presbyterians about 635,000, the number of Protestant dissenters about 22,000, and the number of Roman Catholics about 6,423,000; therefore it appears that the Protestant clerical signatures to the applications to us bear to the Roman Catholic clerical signatures about the same proportion that the number of Protestants bears to that of the Roman Catholics in the mass of the population, and the Protestant lay signatures a much higher proportion.

We gave, in a separate Return, the names of the Protestant and Roman Catholic clergymen who had signed each application; and it showed that several persons had signed more than one. The same fact was pointed out by a member of our Board, who was examined upon the subject-matter of our Report before a Committee of the House of Commons in August last. We thus expressly showed that the number of signatures exceeded the number of persons who had applied to us for aid.

We now beg leave to speak not of signatures, but of persons; and we annex a list of the clergymen of the Established Church, of the Presbyterian and other Protestant Dissenting clergymen, and of the Roman Catholic clergymen, who have signed applications to us for aid that has been granted up to the present time.

The numbers are, of clergymen of the Established Church 127; of the Presbyterian and other Protestant Dissenting clergymen 103; of Roman Catholic clergymen 941. Thus it appears that the number of Protestant clergymen who have

signed applications to us bears rather a higher proportion to the number of Roman Catholic clergymen who have done so, than their signatures did to the Roman Catholic signatures, according to our former Report.*

But the author says,—

"I find that several of the clergymen stated in the Report of the 25th of March of last year to be applicants to the Board have been dead these two or three years; that several others have withdrawn; that several others have ceased to have any connexion with the parties with which they were concerned when the schools were established; that many had never any connexion with the parishes at all; and that of the existence of at least one no traces can be found. In short, I pledge myself, if your Lordships will grant me this Committee, to show by incontrovertible evidence that the number of 140 will dwindle down to 40 at most."

Three clergymen of the Established Church included in the Report have, we understand, died, and eight have withdrawn their signatures. Three Presbyterian clergymen, too, have withdrawn theirs, but this does not in the slightest degree falsify our statement.

What we undertook to give, and what we did give, was not a list of clergymen then acting in concert with us, but of clergymen who at different times had signed applications to us for aid.

We have, however, in the list which we now give, noted the persons who, we understand, have died, and the persons who have signified to us their desire to withdraw their signatures; and deducting these from the whole number, there remain 216 Protestant clerical applicants, that is to say, 116 clergymen of the Established Church, and 100 Presbyterian and other Protestant Dissenting clergymen.

Of the 116 clergymen of the Established Church, 95, it will be seen, have care of souls in the respective places from which the applications have come.

3. The author asserts that, in some cases, the names put down "are gross forgeries;" he specifies, however, but one, and we shall show how the fact stands as to it.

He states that two clergymen of the Church of England are represented by us as applicants for a National School in the parish of Delgany, of which Mr. Clevver is rector; that the names of these two applicants are Cockburn and Morrison; and that "Mr. Morrison, finding that his name had been put forth as one of the applicants for this school, immediately wrote to Mr. Clevver assuring him that he had never signed any such application, and that he wondered who it was that had had the audacity to put his name to such a document." The pamphlet adds, "The other gentleman is now in Italy, and therefore whether his name was forged or not cannot be ascertained."

We must now state—and we shall show on what grounds we state—that we have not the slightest doubt that the name of Mr. Morrison was put to the application in question either by himself or by his father. The person who was collecting signatures to the application avers that he took it to Mr. Morrison's father, who lives in the immediate neighbourhood of the school, for his signature, and that the father returned it with his own and his son's. Mr. Morrison, the father, came to our office on the subject a few months ago, and at first said that he knew nothing of the application: when, however, his signature to it was shown to him in his known handwriting, he said that he could not deny that it was his, but that he had no recollection of the matter.

Mr. Morrison, the son, at the same time wrote to us, positively denying that he either signed the application or authorized any person to do so. It is manifest, however, on the face of the document, that his signature and his father's were written at the same time and in the same ink. His signature, too, bears a striking resemblance to the handwriting of the note which he wrote to us on the subject; we therefore made a request to him, through his father, that he would call at our office and look at it; but he has not thought proper to do so.—We do not now include him in our list of applicants.

Mr. Cockburn, the other gentleman referred to, has called at our office since his return from Italy, and has declared his signature to be genuine.

The author states that neither Mr. Morrison nor Mr. Cockburn was curate of

* The signatures of Protestant clergymen were altogether 320; of Roman Catholic clergymen, 1,397. If, then, there were 390 Protestant clerical signatures for 1,397 Roman Catholics, how many Protestant clerical persons should there be for 940 Roman Catholics? The answer is 215 and a fraction; whereas the actual number is 290.

the parish from which the application came. We never stated that either was. He states that Mr. Robertson, who signed one of the Dublin applications, was not resident within the parish from which it came; neither did we state that he was. It frequently happens that a school is attended by children of different parishes, and we should consider any clergyman residing in the immediate neighbourhood as a resident clergyman within the meaning of our rules.

Mr. Robertson, we understand, died about two years ago at his residence in Queen-street.

4. The pamphlet controverts an opinion expressed in the Report, 'that the new system of education has proved generally beneficial and acceptable to Protestants and Roman Catholics, according to their respective wants.' He maintains that it "has been repudiated by one great and important section of the nation" (the Protestant), "and therefore that the scheme has failed." To prove this he goes into a variety of statements,—several of them most erroneous,—with respect to the distribution of our funds. Wishing to avoid complexity, we will not follow him through them point by point, but we shall show, in a very few words, that the truth is strictly with us.

Our correspondents for schools amount to 714. These are the persons through whom salaries are paid, and who have, in general, the immediate control of the schools: 231 of them are Protestants, and receive in salaries for teachers 3,190*l.* a-year; 483 are Roman Catholics, and receive in salaries 8,721*l.* a-year; the Protestants, therefore, constitute nearly a third of the whole number of correspondents; although Protestants constitute less than a fifth of the whole population of Ireland.*

We give a List of the Correspondents in the Appendix, distinguishing Protestants from Roman Catholics, and showing the salary paid through each.

To that list we refer for proof,—clear and positive proof,—that the new system of education has proved 'generally beneficial and acceptable to Protestants and Roman Catholics, according to their respective wants.' To it we also refer for a complete refutation of the statement that "the system has been repudiated by one great and important section of the nation," and therefore "that the scheme has failed."

5. The pamphlet objects to our giving aid to schools in connexion with nunneries, monasteries, or other religious bodies. Upon this point we had a communication with Lord Stanley, when he was Chief Secretary for Ireland. He thought it desirable, as we did, that such schools should be brought under our superintendence, and, therefore, that we should grant aid to them; we have accordingly done so.

6. The author makes injurious statements with respect to several of our schools; but, in general, he has taken care to express himself in such a way as to render it impossible for us even to surmise the particular schools to which he alludes. In three cases only has he enabled us to comprehend his allusion, and to each of these we shall now apply ourselves. He says,—

"I am prepared with evidence to show that in one of the schools, under the superintendence of a monk, there has been erected an altar; that for more than two years the service of the Mass has been performed there during school hours! and in the presence of the half dozen

* The Correspondents are divided among the several Provinces as follows:—

ULSTER.			MUNSTER.		
Established Church Clergymen	23	£ 352	Protestant Clergymen	5	£ 112
Presbyterian, &c., ditto	40	683	Roman Catholic ditto	81	1,617
Roman Catholic ditto	101	1,569	Protestant Laymen	20	202
Protestant Laymen	110	1,259	Roman Catholic ditto	21	490
Roman Catholic ditto	22	263			
	296	£4,151		130	£2,313
LEINSTER.			CONNAUGHT.		
Protestant Clergymen	1	£ 10	Protestant Clergymen	1	£ 8
Roman Catholic Clergymen	142	2,763	Roman Catholic Clergymen	51	1,038
Protestant Laymen	23	388	Protestant Laymen	8	115
Roman Catholic ditto	49	918	Roman Catholic ditto	14	249
	214	£4,079		74	£1,370

It will be seen from the above that in Ulster, where Protestants of the poorer class are usually to be found, the salaries payable through Protestants greatly exceed those payable through Roman Catholics.

Protestant children who may have been induced to attend the school. The clergyman of the parish in which this took place brought it to the attention of one of the Commissioners of Public Instruction, who undertook to represent it to the Board. No doubt that gentleman fulfilled his undertaking, for subsequently an order came down from the Board to remove this altar. But, my Lords, it is necessary for me to state that, before this representation was made to the Board, one or other of the inspectors had been frequently there; and if he had inspected anything he must have seen this altar, and if he had inquired about anything he must have been informed of its use. Be this as it may, after the representation of the Commissioners of Public Instruction, an order came down for the removal of this altar; but some time afterwards the curate of the parish, to his utter surprise, saw the altar still continue, notwithstanding its prohibition; and on asking the superintendent, 'How comes this?' he was told by the leading monk that he had got the special permission of the Board to keep the altar in the school till the new Roman Catholic chapel, then building in the same parish, should be ready to receive it, the outer walls of which were only at the time erected."

The school here alluded to is the school of Esker, in the county of Galway; it was built by the Rev. Peter Smyth, the head of a religious order established there, with money not granted by us, but which he collected by his individual exertions in England and Ireland. The aid we afford it is by way of salary and school requisites. The application to us on behalf of this school was signed by the *rector of the parish in which it is situated*; he has never made any complaint of the school to us; moreover, when we originally adopted it, a letter from him to Mr. Smyth was transmitted to us, of which the following is a copy:—

"Rev. and dear Sir,

Kiltouerna Glebe, 13th February 1832.

"In answer to your observations relative to the schools at Esker, in the parish of Kiltulla, I have only to say that I fully agree with you as to your intention of sending a Memorial to the Commissioners of Education; and if my concurring in, and adding my signature as rector of Kiltulla, will forward the object, I will do so most readily whenever a Memorial is prepared conformable to the instructions of the Commissioners.

"I am, indeed, very desirous of making a fair experiment of the plan of education proposed by His Majesty's Government, and wish it every possible success. Your school is so well known, and so much approved of by the gentry of this neighbourhood, that I would suppose my single signature, except for the sake of form, would be almost superfluous.

"Believe me to remain,

"Respectfully and dear Sir,

"Yours very faithful servant,

(Signed)

"ALEXANDER MACAULEY.

"To the Rev. Mr. Smyth, Esker."

With respect to the altar and the celebration of Mass, our inspector reported to us, before we heard of it from one of the Commissioners of Public Instruction, that there was an altar in a recess of the school, but which was screened by a curtain from the public view, and in which the service of the Mass was performed for such children as attended *before school hours*. We directed that the practice should be discontinued: it has been so, and the altar has been removed.

There are upwards of 500 children educated at this place: the letter of the rector shows the high estimation in which the school is held by the gentry of the country. Lord Clonbrock, Mr. Daly the late member for the county, and other Protestant gentlemen, are amongst the subscribers to it. The reports made to us of it are most favourable; we therefore consider it well deserving of our support.

As to the statement, "that for more than two years the service of the Mass has been performed there during school hours in the presence of the half dozen Protestant children who may have been induced to attend the school," we do not believe it. Mr. Smyth, the manager of the school, positively denies the fact, and declares that the service of the Mass never was performed during school hours. He states, too, that there are no Protestants in the parish; and this appears by the Report of the Commissioners of Public Instruction: but he adds, that two or three children of Protestants who belong to a Police Station at some distance from the school, and two children of a *Protestant gentleman* who resides within about three miles of the school, have been occasionally sent there during the school hours.

The pamphlet speaks of the curate of the parish in which the school is situated, as if the author were in communication with him. Of the curate we know nothing; of the rector we do; he has, as we already stated, signed the application to us for aid towards the school, and in signing it undertook that our regulations should be faithfully observed. His letter to Mr. Smyth shows the good spirit in which he acts. If the curate heard that the service of the Mass was performed in the school during school hours, and in the presence, too, of Protestant children, it

was his duty to communicate the fact to his rector, particularly as that rector had signed the application to us for aid to the school. Had the curate so done, and had the rector neglected to interfere in the matter, a thing most improbable, then the curate should have applied to his diocesan, or to us; but he has done no such thing. We know not whether he be the author's informant or not; but this we must say, that if he be, the author ought to have told him that it was to his rector, or to his diocesan, or to this Board, of which a prelate of his church is a member, and not to a stranger in England, that he should appeal upon the subject.

Proceeding to another case, the author states that the master of one of our schools went forth at the head of an organized body—organized by him—in honour of a Roman Catholic bishop, and met him with banners, on which were inscribed the words "Liberty and Religion." He then says,—

"A clergyman residing in the parish where the procession took place, under the direction of a national schoolmaster, felt it his duty to make a representation on the subject to the Board, and he received an assurance that the matter should be inquired into. No inquiry, however, having been instituted, after an interval of several weeks, this gentleman renewed his remonstrance; after this second application, the Board, without the slightest notice to the clergyman, sent down an inspector, but, unhappily, for want of notice, no witnesses were forthcoming. These who could have proved the case were absent, and so off went the inspector, and no further notice was taken of the affair. Another complaint, on account of another act of misconduct, was made against the same schoolmaster; in reference to which the clergyman received from the Board a simple intimation that there had been an inquiry by their inspector, and that they were satisfied. The clergyman did that which he felt due to himself in common justice, he requested that he might see the report made to them by the inspector, but the Commissioners refused to comply with this very reasonable demand. My Lords, on this case I must add one further particular—The complainant stated to the Board that the schoolmaster charged with these offences was a man who had been dismissed from another employment for using treasonable, or at least seditious language to the coast guards. He referred them to proofs of this fact, but to this they thought proper to pay no attention whatsoever."

This statement refers to matter which occurred in the parish and island of Ackill on the coast of Mayo. The clergyman alluded to is the Rev. Mr. Nangle, whose name is mentioned in the police reports and papers which your Excellency lately caused to be transmitted to us; he is, as your Excellency is aware, neither rector nor curate of the parish, nor, as we understand, at all connected with the district, save by a mission which he has undertaken for the conversion of the Roman Catholics there.

When we were originally applied to for aid towards the establishment of schools in Ackill, Mr. Nangle wrote to a member of the Board, requesting he would use his influence to prevent our granting aid for the purpose, as our schools would be opposed to schools which he had already founded there. Of course we could not listen to such a desire, and the aid sought was granted.

Mr. Nangle having thus failed in preventing the establishment of the schools, subsequently sent complaints to us against the master; we had them investigated by one of our inspectors, and we transmit to your Excellency, under a sealed cover, the Report which he then made to us.

Mr. Nangle applied to us for a copy of the Report, but your Excellency will see that it is strictly confidential, and that we could not with propriety give publicity to it; we therefore declined complying with Mr. Nangle's request, informing him that it was not our practice to give copies of the Reports sent to us by our inspectors.

No case whatever was made for the dismissal of the master, but he was warned never again to take part in any public procession: he promised that he never would, and we have never since had the slightest complaint made to us against him. The statement, however, now publicly made, "that he had been dismissed from another employment for using treasonable, or, at least, seditious language to the coast guards," imposes upon him the duty of clearing his character by a proceeding at law against the author or publisher of the pamphlet; we have caused this to be intimated to him, and upon the issue will depend the course which we shall deem it our duty to pursue respecting him.

In the mean time we shall only add, that Mr. Nangle never represented to us that the inspector had gone off without examining his witnesses; but on seeing the pamphlet we immediately communicated with the inspector upon the subject, and our secretary has received from him the following letter, which is a direct contradiction of the story told in the pamphlet about him.

"My dear Sir,

Tues, 11th June 1836.

"At the time of my visit to Askill I fully investigated the charges made against O'Donnell, the teacher of Dugant National School, and examined all the witnesses concerned in those charges, and reported to the Board the result.

"Mr. Nangle regretted he did not know my intention of calling on him, and stated that he would have had all the persons connected with these matters to meet me; I, however, met his objections by telling him I would accompany him to their several homes; we accordingly went to the places where these persons were engaged at the time. Mr. Nangle afterwards stated that had he had notice of my visit he would have had the matter arranged. I could not judge on what grounds he made this assertion, as he did not say that any of his witnesses were unproduced; on the contrary, I accompanied Mr. Nangle across the island, a distance of three or four miles, in order to meet one of the parties.

"From all these circumstances I feel assured that all the persons concerned in the matter were before me.

"In my Report I stated fully to the Board the substance of my interview with Mr. Nangle, which was confined to the matter before the Board.

"I remain, &c.,

(Signed)

"JAMES KELLY.

"To Thomas F. Kelly, Esq."

With respect to the third case to which the pamphlet refers, the author says,—

"I now proceed to a case which, I am sure, will appear to the House to be of a grave character, and one which makes me confident that I shall obtain the assistance of the Noble Marquis near me (the Marquis of Lansdown) in obtaining this Committee which I ask. I am assured, and I believe I can prove the fact, that in a national school built on the property of that Noble Marquis, under the patronage of the Noble Marquis's agent, the boys, just after the execution of certain persons who had been tried and condemned by the special commission in the Queen's county, were found writing these words as their copy—of course set them by the master—'God be with the poor fellows that were hanged at Mayborough.'"

This statement we also disbelieve. We were informed in 1834, not that the boys had been found writing the words in question in their copy-book, but that the words were found written in the copy-book of one of them. We immediately instituted an inquiry into the circumstances, and we were satisfied that the master was blameless.

We agree with the author, that the charge now preferred against the master is of a very grave character. The pamphlet not only states that the master set the words to the children, but that he did so "to imbue their infant minds with feelings of disaffection to the law, to make them honour the men, who had justly suffered for their crimes, as martyrs, to teach them from their earliest infancy to side with the violators of the law, to sympathize with them, and to regard the law itself as a system of tyranny and oppression." We repeat, that this does appear to us to be a very grave charge, and we have therefore intimated to this master, too, that we consider him bound to vindicate himself in a court of justice.

7. There are two other cases spoken of by the author in such a way as would also render him amenable to a court of justice, if he had so expressed himself as to point out the persons to whom he alludes.

He says :—

"I can produce another case in which, on the Board having granted a considerable sum for the fitting up of a national school for boys, under the management of a monastic establishment, the money had been applied in discharge of the expenses for building a wrenery. And in another instance I can prove, on the testimony of Commissioners of Public Instruction, of those who are thought worthy of the confidence of His Majesty's Ministers, and that, too, in a case which a Roman Catholic bishop was concerned, that a sum of £100, granted by the Board for the purposes of a school, was abstracted from the uses for which it had been granted, and applied towards the building of a Roman Catholic chapel."

We have not the slightest reason to suspect that anything of the kind here stated has ever taken place, nor can we imagine to what grants or persons the author alludes: we must add, that if he be in possession of evidence to prove that we have been defrauded in the way he states, he is accessory to the concealment of the fraud, by not particularizing the cases, or communicating the evidence to us.

8. There are some other points to which we must also advert.

The pamphlet speaks of our Scripture extracts as containing corruptions tending to favour the peculiar doctrines of the Church of Rome, but he points out none, nor are we conscious of any.

9. The pamphlet states that there are books used in our schools during the religious instruction of Roman Catholics, and "recommended by the Commissioners," which contain matter offensive to Protestants. Now the Commissioners have never recommended any particular works for the religious instruction either of Protestants or Roman Catholics. Standard works, indeed, of the Established Church, of the Presbyterian Churches, and of the Roman Catholic Church, contain each controversial matter expressed in language offensive to those of another communion; but these no member of the Board is authorized to prohibit. Recommendation, however, upon the subject there has been none, either from the Protestant or Roman Catholic Commissioners.

10. The pamphlet states that the Scripture Extracts are not in general use. The fact, we are persuaded, is otherwise; our inspectors are now out upon their annual inspection; they have already sent us Reports on 332 schools, and they have found the children reading the Extracts in 285 of them.

These schools were not particularly selected for visitation; it may therefore be expected that the Extracts are read in an equal proportion of the schools which remain to be inspected, and therefore that they are used in more than four-fifths of the whole number.

11. The author alludes to the preface to our First Number of Extracts from the New Testament, because it states that the Number contains the whole of the Gospel by St. Luke. The author finds that a few of the verses have been summed up in our own language, instead of being given literally, and this he calls a mutilation. He says further:—

"I have no hesitation in saying that this part of the first chapter of St. Luke, which the Commissioners have left out, is one of the most important passages, perhaps I might say the most important passage, in the Gospel of that Evangelist: it is so in the estimation of our Church, because it gives more fully than is elsewhere given in the Gospels the account of the incarnation of our blessed Lord."

Have we then omitted the matter which shows the incarnation of our Lord? No, we have given it thus:—

'And, in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. [And the angel saluted her as one peculiarly blessed of God; and intimated to her that, although she was a virgin, she should bear a son, by the immediate power of the Holy Ghost, and that she should call his name Jesus, which name signifies Saviour. This name was given to him because, as St. Matthew tells us, he was to save his people from their sins. The same Evangelist says, that Jesus was to be born of a virgin; that an ancient prophecy might be fulfilled which said, Behold a virgin shall be with child and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which, being interpreted, is God with us.]

'When the angel had finished his communication, Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.'

The part placed as above between brackets is so put in order to show that it is not in Scripture language. This we occasionally do, according to the plan which we announced in the preface to the First Number of our Extracts from the Old Testament, and which is as follows:—'When passages are introduced not in Scripture language (chiefly summaries of some portions of the narrative), they are enclosed between brackets, and usually distinguished by being printed in a smaller type.'

It will be observed that the summary of the omitted verses not only contains the substance of them, but also, in addition to this, the explanation (taken from the Gospel of St. Matthew, and which Luke had omitted) of the signification and reason of the name of Jesus, which it was more important to insert, because the Gospel by Matthew is not among the Scripture Extracts hitherto edited by the Board.

An examination of the original verses will, we think, at once explain, to any person accustomed to prepare Scriptural instruction for youth, why we thought it best to give a summary of them in a work intended for school lessons.

Thus impressed, we regard the objection which we are noticing as a mere criticism on an alleged verbal inaccuracy. But having heard some time since that it had been made in another quarter, we directed the preface to be cancelled before we had learned that anything had been said by the author upon the subject. This was accordingly done, and in the preface to the next edition, the words objected to will be omitted altogether.

To suppose that we could really mean or hope to deceive the public into a belief

that we were giving the Gospel of St. Luke *verbatim et literatim*, when we were not doing so, is a supposition which it is impossible that any person giving us credit for common sense, putting common honesty out of the question, could seriously entertain.

12. The author makes a statement respecting a member of the Board, Dr. Murray, which, as Dr. Murray is now absent from Ireland, we feel ourselves particularly called upon to notice.

The author having formerly predicted that no Scripture Extracts would ever be used in our schools, his prediction failed, and it seems he has been told so. As he had declared himself desirous that Extracts should be used, it might perhaps have been expected that he would express satisfaction at finding that the fact was as he desired, though not as he predicted; but instead of doing so, he makes it matter of charge against Dr. Murray, that the Extracts have been sanctioned by him. He says,—

"When I ventured on that prediction, with the falsehood of which the noble and learned Lord reproaches me, I did what he called on your Lordships to do,—I belittled the declaration of a Roman Catholic archbishop made upon his oath. In doing so, I own that I was wrong; I own that I have justly subjected myself to the taunt of the noble and learned Lord, and I promise him that I never again will offend in like manner. But true it is, my Lords, that I said in 1832 that no Scripture extracts could be agreed upon by the different members of the Board. I said this, because I was sure that the Protestant Commissioners could not consent wholly to abandon the Protestant version of the Scripture and to adopt the Douay in its place. On the other hand, I believed that the Roman Catholic Commissioners would admit of nothing but the Douay version; therefore I said that no Scripture extracts could be agreed upon. I believed this, and ventured to predict it accordingly, because I knew (I forget whether I then stated such to be the ground of my belief) that Dr. Murray had so sworn before the Commissioners of Irish Education Inquiry in the year 1824. I have the Report of these Commissioners before me, and will read an extract from the evidence of Dr. Murray upon which I founded my prediction. He answered, 'Supposing that portions of Scripture should be extracted, in the words of the Protestant authorized version for instance, would there be any objection to this being used equally by Protestant and Roman Catholic children?' Dr. Murray's answer, upon his oath, was, 'I think that if any words attributed to our Saviour were given under any other form than that which is set down in the Douay version, an objection would lie against it. As to extracts, if they are given as Scripture, it must be remembered that we have all along said we could not propose to the children anything as Scripture except what is taken from our own version.'"

The author does not quote faithfully. What he gives as Dr. Murray's sworn answer to a particular question is made up of an answer to one question, and of part of an answer to another. We give extracts in the Appendix, from the examination of which the author speaks. It will be seen by these that Dr. Murray did not object to a compilation from Scripture, which should be conformable both to the Protestant authorized and Roman Catholic versions. Besides, after the examination had taken place, a work, composed entirely of selections from the Protestant authorized version, was sent to him by the Commissioners, and he returned it with the following letter to the chairman:—

"My dear Sir,

"I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th instant, which owing to my absence from town, only reached me this morning.

"As the work which you have had the goodness to send me is a compilation taken exclusively and *verbatim* from the Protestant version of the New Testament, I think it would be open to the objections already stated by the Catholic bishops to the Commissioners with reference to a similar work. Allow me, however, to observe, that those objections might in my opinion be removed, if the matter of the work were abstracted both from the Catholic and Protestant versions, when they substantially agree, without the words being taken throughout *literatim* from either, according to the principles explained by us to the Commissioners when last we had the honour of an interview with them.

"I have the honour, &c.

(Signed) "D. MURRAY.

"Thomas Frankland Lewis, Esq."

This letter is given in the *very* Report from which the author purports to quote. Yet, with it before him, he states that he believed the Roman Catholic Commissioners would admit of nothing but the Douay version; and, because Dr. Murray approves of the extracts which we are now publishing, and which are not taken either from the Protestant version or the Roman Catholic version exclusively, but are an original compilation avowedly made by ourselves upon a comparison of the Protestant and Douay versions with the original,—because Dr. Murray

approves of this work, a work conformable to the views expressed in his examination and in his letter, he is charged with perjury! And as if this were not enough, the author intimates that he will never again believe a Roman Catholic bishop upon his oath.

This is beyond comment.

13. The author, in a note, laments that the Protestant Ecclesiastical Commissioners should have objected to supplying the Roman Catholic children with the Douay version of the New Testament when it was proposed to them to do so by His Majesty's Government; and in order to fasten a charge of inconsistency in this respect on the Archbishop of Dublin, he quotes the following words from an answer formerly given by the Archbishop to an address from his clergy:—

"The Douay version is permitted to be used under the Kildare-place system. And I agree with them (the promoters of the Kildare-place schools) in thinking that there is no translation of the Bible extant which is not better than none, *when that is the alternative.*" What the Archbishop thus said had regard to a translation of Scripture *without notes*; he referred to the system pursued by the Kildare-place Society, which was merely to permit the Douay translation to be used in schools *without notes*; whereas the proposal of the Government, following the recommendation of a Committee of the House of Commons, was, that the Commissioners should give the Douay version *with notes*. To this the Archbishop and the other Protestant Ecclesiastical Commissioners objected. Had it been proposed to the Roman Catholic Commissioners to supply Protestant children not merely with the authorized Protestant version, but with a version inculcating Protestant doctrine, they would have declined administering a fund which was to be so applied.

It seems difficult to conceive on what principle a Protestant prelate should lament that Protestant Commissioners were not employed in inculcating Roman Catholic doctrines:—what would the author have said if they had been so employed?

14. The author quotes former expressions of the Archbishop of Dublin to show that he (the Archbishop) did not originally propose that the new system of education should be *universal*. The author then represents our last Report as demanding that it should be *universal*, and says, "I think it hardly possible, although the Report bears the signature of every member of the Commission, that it could have been unanimously agreed to." The answer to this is, that there is not the slightest inconsistency between what the Archbishop of Dublin formerly said and what is proposed by the Report.

The expressions of the Archbishop of Dublin, which the author particularly quotes, are,—

"From all that I have been able to learn, I have been convinced that no one description of school can be the best adapted to all parishes alike.

"The rectors of each parish must be left to judge what system is best suited to his own; and I am very far from wishing that a more imperfect system should be introduced in any place where one intrinsically better can be made available.

"I never understood that it was intended to substitute such (national) schools for those on a more perfect system, in any place where such should have been introduced and found to succeed, but to rescue from hopeless ignorance those who (whether by their own fault or otherwise) could not be brought to avail themselves of any better plan.

"Where schools on the Kildare plan, or on one intrinsically better, are found to work well, and to embrace the great mass of the population, I should be truly sorry to see an inferior one substituted. But in the many districts where the case is otherwise, it does seem to me highly desirable that at least an attempt should be made to impart some useful knowledge to those who would, otherwise, either be left in hopeless ignorance, or would learn more evil than good from perhaps some hedge schoolmasters, who may be secretaries to a basil of incandescences."

If the Report required, as represented in the pamphlet, that the new system should be adopted universally, or to the exclusion of a better where a better existed, then it would be inconsistent with the Archbishop of Dublin's former expressions; but it does no such thing. Your Excellency desired us to state in it '*what extension could be given to the new system of education, consistently with the demand for instruction, and with due regard to the preparation necessary for training schoolmasters upon whom reliance could be placed, in respect to competency, character, and discretion, and what amount of funds might be annually expended beneficially by the State for that purpose.*' In answering this query we said, "The population of Ireland amounts to about 8,000,000, and of these, probably, there

are 1,140,000 (or about a seventh of the whole) between the ages of 7 and 13 years. We are satisfied that at least one-half of that number would require the aid of the National Schools; and as we do not think a school should, in general, much exceed 100, we consider that there should be 5,000 National Schools established, each under a competent teacher."

Instead, therefore, of proposing that the new system should be *universally* adopted, we merely give it as our opinion that the aid of the National Schools would be required by *half* of those who are of the age for education.

The view which we thus expressed is completely borne out by the Second Report of the Commissioners of Public Instruction. It shows that there is a deplorable deficiency of schools in many parts of Ireland; that there are 443 parishes without a school in any of them; that there are 5,633 schools supported by payments from the children; and that the great majority of these (amongst which are many called *hedger schools*) are conducted for the education of the poor.

The schools for the poor, which are thus supported by payments from the children, and which are so numerous, have been repeatedly represented as of the very worst description; they were so represented by the Commissioners of Education of 1812, and again by the Commissioners of 1825. These are the schools for which the Report would have the National Schools substituted; and this is precisely what the Archbishop of Dublin desires in the expressions which the author quotes.

We have now gone through the whole of the pamphlet, and have answered, we hope, every tangible part of it. We have thus noticed it because it was your Excellency's wish that we should do so; we should otherwise have spared ourselves so ungrateful a task. We accepted the Commission with which we are charged in the hope that it might enable us to pour oil on the troubled waters of Ireland, and to allay those dreadful dissensions which divide and distract her people: we are labouring so to do. We have no sordid object to accomplish, no factions purpose to serve, no bigoted passion to gratify; we are endeavouring to give a new stamp to the rising generation of the country, to bring children of all denominations together from their infancy, in feelings of charity and good-will; to make them regard each other, not as belonging to rival sects, but as subjects of the same King, and fellows in the same redemption; so that all who profess and call themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth, and "may hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life." This is the end we seek; we feel that we have so pursued it as to entitle ourselves to public confidence and support, and that confidence and support we have the satisfaction to say we enjoy and received from many persons of different religious views, and of different political opinions. We, therefore, hope it may not again be deemed necessary that we should give a formal contradiction to the accusations which prejudice or malice may, from time to time, put forth against us. If persons who see, or think they see, anything wrong in the working of the system committed to us, will communicate with the Board upon the subject, they will find us ever ready, to the utmost of our power, to apply a remedy to the evil. If they will not do so, and will yet assail our proceedings before the public, it may, we think, be safely left to the candour and good sense of the country, without any interference from us, to discriminate their motives, and deal with their statements according to their deserts.

(Signed)

LEINSTER.
RICHARD, DUBLIN.
FRANC. SADLER.
JAMES, CARLILE.
A. R. BLAKE.
ROBERT HOLMES.

July 18th, 1836.

LONDON:
Printed by W. CROWE and Sons, Strand-street,
For His Majesty's Stationery Office.

APPENDIX

TO

THE THIRD REPORT

OF THE

COMMISSIONERS

OF

NATIONAL EDUCATION

IN IRELAND,

FOR THE YEAR ENDING MARCH

1836.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY W. CLOWES AND SONS, STAMFORD STREET,
FOR HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE.

1836.

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